

## Step 1: Discover Yourself

It sounds weird right?

Discover yourself?

In this handbook, “discover yourself” means thinking about who you are and what you want for the future. This should be your first step. When you think about the activities and subjects you like, it’s easier to match them with jobs, careers, and college majors (also called areas of concentration).

Even if you already have ideas about colleges, jobs, and careers, it’s still a good idea to work through this section. You might find that your interests have changed, or that another job or career more closely matches your ideal. At this point, it’s also a good idea to talk to someone you trust, like a family member, school counselor, teacher, or friend. School counselors and career centers often have interest inventories or short questionnaires to help you narrow your career focus. These can also help you learn about your strengths and weaknesses. Parents, friends, and teachers can also point out talents you didn’t know you had.

### ► Interests

These are things that you like to do or that you’ve always wanted to do. What are your favorite hobbies? What school subjects do you enjoy? What sports do you play for fun? Do you like to work with people, ideas, numbers and calculations, or things?

### ► Abilities

Abilities are things you can do well. What are your special talents or gifts? Are you a good listener, talker, artist, or mechanic? What things come naturally to you?

### ► Values and Priorities

Values are a big part of who you are. They are not good or bad, right or wrong. They are simply personal rules or guidelines that help you decide what is important. Everyone’s values are different. You might value family over friends or job satisfaction over money. What are your top priorities?

**Free interest inventories are available on the Internet. These can help you discover your interests and abilities. You may be required to create a member account to access these inventories.**

- [www.icpac.indiana.edu/careers/](http://www.icpac.indiana.edu/careers/)
- [www.careerkey.org](http://www.careerkey.org)
- [www.review.com/career](http://www.review.com/career)
- [www.testingroom.com](http://www.testingroom.com)

### ► Money Matters

What kind of lifestyle do you imagine for yourself? Is it important to have a big house and new car, or are your needs more modest? Are you planning to have a family someday? You might not be able to get by with a low-wage job if you have to care for someone else. Consider the education you will need to meet your financial responsibilities.

### ► Physical Factors

Physical challenges can be an important part of some jobs. You might be required to work outside, lift heavy objects, or maintain a fast pace. Decide how much physical labor you are willing or able to do. Also, think about any physical or learning challenges that might require some help.

### ► Academic Goals

How long do you want to stay in school? Many careers and professions require two, four, six, or even eight years of training after high school. What level of skill do you want to reach? And does this match your lifestyle preferences?

“The final  
forming  
of a person's  
character  
lies in  
their own  
hands.”

—Anne Frank